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GAINING GROUND

Achieving Excellence in High Poverty Schools

Division of State Services and Technical Assistance

Summary of States' Responsibilities Under *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

Phyllis McClure

Below is a summary of states' responsibility under Title I, Part A. Sections 1112, 1116, and 1117 of the recently reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. In upcoming issues of *Gaining Ground*, we will outline other parts of the Act, including Title I, Part A, section 1119 and Title II. Section 1119 addresses the qualifications for teachers and paraprofessionals in Title I schools, while Title II addresses preparing, training, and recruiting high quality teachers and principals.

A. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PLANS

The state educational agency (SEA) shall approve a local educational agency (LEA) plan only if it determines that the agency's plan

1. meets the requirements of Title I Part A;
2. enables Title I schools to help children meet the state's academic standards;
3. is coordinated with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, the Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, the McKinney-Vento Act and others;
4. complies with LEAs responsibilities for school improvement (Section 1116), parent involvement (Section 1118) and qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals (Section 1119);
5. provides notice to parents of children who have been identified for participation or who are participating in language instruction programs for children who are or who may be limited-English proficient.

B. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

1. Assessment Results to LEA The SEA must ensure that the results of the state academic assessments are made available to LEAs before the beginning of the next school year.

2. Reservation for School Improvement

Two percent of the state allocation under Title I, Part A for Fiscal years 2002 and 2003 and four percent for fiscal years 2004-2007 is set aside for school improvement. **This setaside is in addition to the one percent setaside for state administration.** Of these amounts, the state keeps five percent to carry out responsibilities for school and LEA improvement, state operated school support teams, a school recognition program, and financial awards to teachers. This five percent may be used for administration, evaluation, and technical assistance.

The balance of 95 percent is allocated to LEAs for their school improvement activities. With a LEA's approval, the state may provide school improvement services directly through state school support teams or educational service agencies.

3. Allocations In allocating school improvement funds to LEAs, the state shall give priority to LEAs that: serve the lowest-achieving students; demonstrate the greatest need for school improvement funds; demonstrate the strongest commitment to ensuring that funds are used to enable the lowest-achieving schools to meet their annual measurable objectives.

4. **Public List** The state must make publicly available a list of schools that have received funds or services from the school improvement funds and the percentage of low-income students in each school.

C. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE AND SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Public School Choice And Supplemental Educational Services

Effective In The 2002-2003 School Year

A school that was in school improvement status on January 7, 2002 shall be treated as a school in its first year of improvement under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Students in this school must be given the option of transferring to another public school not in improvement status or corrective action, including a public charter school.

A school that had been in school improvement status for two or more years on January 7, 2002 shall be treated as a school in its second year of school improvement. That is, it failed to achieve

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New Law Pledges to Leave No Child Behind in Reading

Jana Martella

Poor performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) over the last decade has created a clarion call for the implementation of a nationwide comprehensive reading program to assure all children are successful readers by grade four. Title I, Part B, of *No Child Left Behind* does just that in the Reading First Program. Unlike its predecessor, the Reading Excellence Act, Reading First will flow as a formula grant to every state and territory. In addition, a much larger share, 20 percent, is reserved for the states to administer the program. The lion's share of the state administrative set-aside is reserved for the development and implementation of professional development programs of "scientifically based reading instruction" for grades K through 3 teachers.

The fiscal year 2002 appropriation for the new Reading First will drive \$900 million to the states on a formula based on Title I poverty counts. State education agencies will then allocate five-year grants to local school districts on a competitive basis, with priority given to districts with high concentrations of poverty and/or high numbers of students in grades K through 3 measured below grade level in reading.

Of particular significance in the new law is the prescriptive definition of "scientifically based reading instruction," with the emphasis on five key early reading skills:

- *Phonemic awareness*: the ability to hear, identify, and play with individual sounds, or phonemes, in spoken words;
- *Phonics*: the relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language;
- *Fluency*: the capacity to read text accurately and quickly;
- *Vocabulary*: the words students must know to communicate effectively; and

- *Comprehension*: the ability to understand and gain meaning from what has been read.

All pre- and in-service professional development programs within the purview of the state must also focus on these key components of so-called "evidence-based reading instruction." Funds allocated to local districts may be used to provide an array of reading related interventions and services, such as identifying students having difficulty with reading, providing scientifically based reading instruction, providing professional development for teachers, and expanding access to "engaging reading materials" within school libraries and classrooms.

Other state responsibilities under Reading First include the establishment of a state Reading and Literacy Partnership. This partnership will be chiefly responsible for coordinating the application for the grant to the state, and for overseeing and evaluating the state education agency's activities under the law. The partnership must include the governor, the chief state school officer, the chairs and ranking members of the education committees of the state legislature, and other partnership members chosen jointly by the governor and chief state school officer. Those other members must include local district representation, a community-based organization focused on reading, a parent, a teacher, and a family literacy service provider.

The local districts must implement the following components within their Reading First subgrants:

- Select and administer screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based reading assessments;
- Administer scientifically based reading programs for children who have reading difficulties, are at risk of being referred to special education, who are identified with specific learning disabilities, or who are limited English profi-

- Obtain and use instructional materials based on scientific research evidence;
- Provide professional development for teachers;
- Report data for student achievement (particularly disaggregated data); and
- Promote reading and library programs.

With the dollars reserved for professional development, the state must provide programs for teachers in K through 3 that

- Prepare them in all the "essential components" of scientifically based reading instruction and reading remediation, including materials, programs, assessments, and diagnostic devices for detecting early reading failure;
- Strengthen pre-service courses at all public institutions of higher education; and
- Recommend improvements in state licensure and certification standards in reading.

States must assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the subgrants to their local districts. They must also submit an annual report to the U.S. Secretary of Education evaluating the state plan, showing the schools and local districts with the largest gains in reaching achievement, and demonstrating progress in reducing the number of students statewide who are reading below grade level.

Near April 1, 2002, the U.S. Department expects to issue the application package for Reading First within the *Federal Register*. States are expected to submit their applications to the Department by May 29, 2002, with funding anticipated to be awarded to states with approved applications on or near July 1, 2002.

For further information on the program and responsibilities, legislation, and FAQs, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site on Reading First at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst/index.html>.

Safe and Drug Free Schools In the 21st Century

Nora L. Howley

No Child Left Behind, as the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act is known, offers schools and communities a renewed impetus to provide students with safe and drug-free schools. Through Title IV, 21st Century Schools, two major sections, Part A, the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, and Part B, the 21st Century Learning Community Centers, the Act has an impact on the delivery of programs and services in schools. Although similar to the 1994 version, the new Safe and Drug Free School and Communities (SDFSC) Act has several significant changes. The first of these provides substantial funding to state and local education agencies in support of the development of safe places for children to learn to high standards.

Overview

The new law retains, with some changes (see below), state formula grants and national discretionary activities. It also requires three new provisions (in Title IX, General Provisions). First, states must allow students who attend persistently dangerous schools or who become victims of violent crimes at school to transfer to a safe school; second, states must report on school safety to the public; and, third, school districts are required to implement drug and violence prevention programs of demonstrated effectiveness.

Major changes

Among the major changes are the authorization of several new programs, including:

- Community service for expelled or suspended students;
- The creation of a "School Security Technology and Resource Center," a partnership of the Sandia National Laboratories, the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center, and the National Center for Rural Law Enforcement;

- Grants to local education agencies to reduce alcohol abuse;
- Grants to local education agencies and non-profit community based organizations to establish mentoring programs;
- Creation of a national Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Committee; and
- Requirement that local education agencies receiving SDFSC funding have a plan for keeping schools safe and drug free that includes appropriate and effective discipline policies, security procedures, prevention activities, a student code of conduct, and a crisis management plan for responding to violent or traumatic incidents on school grounds.
- The establishment of National Center for School and Youth Safety that will carry out the following activities:
 - Emergency assistance (including counseling for victims and enhanced security) to local communities to respond to school safety crises;
 - A national, toll-free and anonymous telephone hotline for students to report criminal activity, threats of criminal activity, and other warning signs of potentially violent or criminal behavior;
 - Consultations with the public regarding school safety through the use of a toll-free telephone number staffed by individuals with expertise in enhancing school safety; and
 - Information and outreach.

As in other parts of the law, accountability provisions are strengthened. The two provisions of greatest significance are

- The requirement that local prevention programs meet *principles of effectiveness*, and
- Establishment of a new *uniform management information and reporting system*.

There are also changes to the allocation and set-asides of funding:

- *Federal-to-State*: State grant allocations are based 50 percent on the Title I concentration grants formula and 50 percent on population, with a hold-harmless to ensure that no state receives less in 2002 or future years than it received in 2001. Governors may elect to receive up to 20 percent of their state's allocation; the remainder goes to the state educational agency.
- *State-to-Local*: SEA allocations to LEAs are based 60 percent on Title I basic and concentration grants, and 40 percent on enrollment.
- *Federal Reservations of National Programs Funds*: Up to \$2 million for a national impact evaluation; and the amount necessary to make continuation awards to grantees under the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative.
- *State Reservations of SEA Funds*: Up to five percent for program activities and up to three percent for administrative costs (and for fiscal year 2002 only, up to four percent for administrative costs, if the additional funds are used to implement the required *uniform management and reporting system*), provided that, in any fiscal year, at least 93 percent of the SEA's allocation is distributed to LEAs
- *State Reservations of Governors' Funds*: Up to three percent for administrative costs.

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act is a significant source of support to state and local education efforts to assure that children are coming to school healthy and ready to learn. Future issues of *Gaining Ground* will contain additional information about a number of provisions including the *Principles of Effectiveness* and the *Uniform Management and Reporting System*.

This article is based on the summary of changes provided by the U.S. Department of Education, which can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/esea/progsum/title4a.html#drug>.

Expecting Success

Special Education Service Delivery Topic of New Publications

One of the special education efforts of the High Poverty Schools Initiative is to investigate and showcase the delivery of special education services in five high achieving, high poverty schools in Texas. Funded by a three-year grant from the federal Office of Special Education Programs and through subcontracts with the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, the Initiative studied the experiences of students with disabilities in five Texas elementary schools and the policy factors that contributed to these experiences

In April 2002, a trio of documents resulting from this research will be published. The first document, entitled *Expecting Success: A Study of Five High Performing, High Poverty Schools*, identifies and describes practices that support the achievement of students enrolled in five high performing, high poverty elementary schools. The five schools selected for the study attained high levels of achievement in the Texas accountability system, which rates elementary schools according to their attendance rates and their student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Significantly, the schools profiled in this report met the state's high standards while exempting a low percentage of students with disabilities from taking the TAAS.

These schools prove that it is possible to meet and even surpass high standards while including students with disabilities in state assessments and in the state accountability system. Moreover, they demonstrate forcefully that students with disabilities can be held to challenging academic standards.

The five study schools vary in terms of their location, size, student demographics, and special education populations. Three of the schools are located in large urban areas and two,

in smaller, more rural communities. Enrollment varies from 305 students at the smallest school to 985 at the largest. At four of the schools the majority of students are Latino, and at one of the schools the majority of students are African American. Income levels of the families served varies significantly. At three of the schools, over 85 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, while only slightly more than half of students qualify at the other two schools. At the time of selection for the study, three of the schools included a relatively low number of students receiving special education services, while the number of students who received special education services at the other two schools only slightly exceeded the state average.

Despite these variations, the study schools share many similarities in terms of the strategies they employ to strengthen academic performance:

- Each of the schools embraces the belief that all students can be academically successful. They set measurable and high goals for all students and focus on intensive, early intervention efforts to bring students up to grade level.
- Administrators at these schools put the talents and experience of teachers to their best use. They encourage teacher creativity and leadership, align resources with instructional priorities, and collaborate with teachers and support staff in formulating instructional strategies.
- Faculty and staff at these schools regularly communicate across teaching areas and programs and are eager to learn from one another.
- Staff at each school use student assessment data to identify areas where students can improve and where their own teaching strategies can be adjusted to meet students' needs.

- A culture of student-centered learning predominated at each of these schools. Attention was paid to areas where students were experiencing difficulty and students were provided opportunities to excel in areas of special interest.
- Educators at these schools persist in addressing academic barriers to learning, collaborate with colleagues in identifying solutions to barriers, and participate in school-wide intervention strategies such as tutoring and mentoring programs.
- Faculty and staff at the five schools view parents as critical partners in the educational process. At each of the schools, parental participation is solicited and facilitated by faculty and staff.
- While special education services are valued and supported at the schools, educators consider a referral for such services a last resort. Staff employ multiple intervention strategies before they determine that a referral for special education services is appropriate. Moreover, the schools provide formal opportunities for instructional staff to brainstorm additional interventions before referral for special education testing.
- Educators at these schools share a view of special education as a means to fully integrate students into the regular education program. Students are provided every means of support and assistance they need, but educators view placement in special education as a temporary rather than permanent placement.

These five schools epitomize the achievement among all students envisioned by *No Child Left Behind*. As states focus on having all students meet challenging standards and closing the achievement gap, greater attention must be devoted to improving the performance of students with and at-risk of developing disabilities. With high expectations, a focus on collaboration, and emphasis on addressing academic barriers to learning, these

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ESEA and Changes in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

Mark H. Emery

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001, the *No Child Left Behind Act*, has made significant changes to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program. The most significant change is that the program will no longer be a federal discretionary program limited to local educational agencies; instead, funds will now be allotted to states by formula, and each state education agency (SEA) will be responsible for administering, monitoring, evaluating, and providing training and technical assistance for this extended learning initiative. Under the reauthorization (Title IV, Part B), states will receive funds based on their share of Title I, Part A funds. Each SEA will manage grant competitions and make awards to eligible entities within their state. Eligible organizations include local school districts, community-based organizations (which include faith-based organizations), other public or private entities, and consortia of such groups. States can make awards only to applicants that will serve students who attend schools receiving Title I funds or schools that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families. States must give priority to applicants providing services to students in low-performing schools.

The purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities in community learning centers that:

- provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including tutorial services, to help students meet state and local academic standards;
- offer a broad array of additional activities such as youth development, art, music, recreation, drug and violence prevention, and other programs; and

- offer families of students served opportunities for literacy and related academic development.

Significant new funding issues must be addressed at both the state and local levels. The SEA will make awards for a period of not less than three and not more than five years. The minimum amount of each award is \$50,000. The SEA may retain up to five percent of their allocation for administrative purposes: two percent for the grant review and administrative processes and three percent for evaluation and providing training and technical assistance. Each eligible organization must develop a sustainability plan and describe how the community learning center will continue beyond the duration of the grant. Each potential grantee must also describe how the transportation needs of the students will be met. Both the grantee and the SEA must ensure that the funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, other federal, state, or local public funds expended for similar efforts. SEAs may require local matching funds; however, these funds may not exceed the amount of the grant and may not be derived from other state or federal funds.

Many details of the new legislation cannot be addressed in this short review. More information is available on the U.S. Department of Education Web site, including a draft of the non-regulatory guidance. See www.ed.gov/21stcclc/state.html.

For more information about the Extended Learning Initiative of the High Poverty Schools project, please contact Mark Emery at (202)326-8699 or marke@ccsso.org

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schools achieved high levels of performance among all students groups. As states and local districts consider strategies for improving the capacities of local schools to serve diverse learners under the new Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the experiences of these five Texas schools should be studied.

The documents can be ordered online at www.ccsso.org. For further information about the project, please contact Elaine Bonner-Tompkins at (202)336-7035 or elainebt@ccsso.org.

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adequate yearly progress (AYP) after the first full year in school improvement. Such school will continue to provide public school choice and provide supplemental educational services.

A school that was in corrective action status on January 7, 2002 must be treated as a school in corrective action status. The LEA will provide public school choice to all students enrolled, provide supplemental educational services, and initiate additional corrective

1. The 2002-2003 School Year Effective the first day of the 2002-2003 school year, the state shall ensure that schools and LEAs that have been identified for improvement will provide public school choice and supplemental educational services. Public school choice is required except if prohibited by state law. The SEA must maintain a list of approved providers across the state and by school district from which parents may select supplemental educational services in non-school hours.

2. SEA Obligations to Implement Supplemental Educational Services

Definition of a provider: a non-profit or for-profit entity or an LEA that:

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- has a demonstrated record of effectiveness in increasing student achievement;
- is capable of providing supplemental educational services consistent with the instructional program of the LEA and state academic standards;
- is financially sound.

Criteria for Providers:

- Provide parents and LEAs with information on the progress of children in increasing achievement in a form and language parents can understand;
- Ensure that instruction and content are consistent with that provided by the LEA and are aligned with state achievement standards;
- Meet all applicable federal, state, local health and safety, and federal civil rights laws;
- Ensure instruction and content are secular, neutral, and non-ideological.

Monitor Providers:

- Develop, implement, and publicly report the standards and techniques for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of services offered by a approved providers.
- Withdraw approval from providers that fail for two consecutive years to contribute to increasing the academic proficiency of students participating in supplemental educational services.
- Provide annual notice to potential providers of the opportunity to provide services and of the applicable procedures for obtaining state approval.

3. Paying for Supplemental

Educational Services The SEA may use state agency funds reserved under Title I, Part A and Title V (Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs, Part A Innovative Programs), to assist LEAs that do not have sufficient funds to provide services under this subsection for all eligible children requesting such services.

LEA's Allocations. To satisfy all requests for supplemental services and

transportation for public school choice, the LEA must spend up to 20 percent of its allocation, as follows:

- 5 percent of public school choice transportation,
- 5 percent for supplemental educational services.
- 10 percent for either or both transportation and supplemental educational services.

The per-child amount for supplemental educational services is the LEA's allocation divided by the estimated census count of children ages 5-17 from families below the poverty level or the actual cost of the services received per-child.

The LEA provides supplemental educational services until the end of the school year in which they were first provided.

4. Exceptions to Requirement for Supplemental Services A state may waive the requirement to provide supplemental educational services upon request of a LEA if the state determines that

- none of the providers on the state-approved list make those services available in the area served by the LEA or within "reasonable distance" of the area;
- the LEA provides evidence that it is not able to provide the services.

If state law prohibits the state educational agency from carrying out one or more of these responsibilities with respect to providers of supplemental educational services, each LEA must carry them out.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY IMPROVEMENT

1. Definition of AYP for Local

Educational Agencies The definition of AYP for LEAs is left to the state and is contained in the state plan.

2. Annual Review Review each year each LEA receiving Title I, Part A funds to determine whether schools are making AYP and whether each LEA is complying with obligations for school improvement, parent involvement, and teacher and paraprofessional qualifications.

The SEA:

- identifies for improvement any LEA that, for two years (including two

consecutive years immediately preceding enactment of the *No Child Left Behind Act*), has failed to make AYP;

- identifies for corrective action any LEA that was in corrective action status under the prior Title I rules;
- provides the LEA with an opportunity to review academic assessment data that was the basis for the identification and to present "supporting evidence" before the SEA makes a final determination "not later than 30 days" after it provides the LEA with the opportunity to review;
- publicizes the results of the review and disseminate them to LEAs, teachers and other staff, students, and the community;
- notifies "promptly" parents of every child who attends a school in the LEA identified for improvement about the results of the review, the reasons why the LEA has been identified, and how parents can "participate in upgrading the quality of the local educational agency."

3. State Action for LEAs in

Improvement Status Within three months after identifying the LEA for improvement, the LEA will revise its plan in consultation with parents and school staff. The plan for LEA improvement (or the revised plan) has to be implemented "expeditiously," but not later than the beginning of the next school year.

4. Contents of LEA Improvement Plan

The plan must include;

- scientifically based research strategies to strengthen the core academic program;
- actions likely to have the greatest impact on improving the academic achievement of students;
- 10 percent of the LEA's Title I Part A funds for professional development, including the 10% set-aside for each school, in addition to the minimum expenditures required under Section 1119 (L) for enhancing teacher and paraprofessional qualifications;
- addressing the fundamental teaching and learning needs of the schools and the specific learning problems of low-achieving students;

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- specific measurable achievement goals for each student subgroup;
- extended learning time for after-school and summer activities and extend the school year;
- strategies to promote effective parent involvement; and
- specifying responsibilities of the SEA and LEA, including the technical assistance to be provided by the SEA.

5. State Technical Assistance The SEA provides technical assistance, if requested, in the development and implementation of the plan. It shall be "supported by effective methods and instructional strategies based on scientifically based research and shall address any problems in implementing parent involvement and upgrading the professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals." This technical assistance may be provided by an entity other than the SEA, as long as the SEA authorizes the entity to do so.

6. State Action for LEAs in Corrective Action "Corrective action" is defined as

- substantially and directly responding to the consistent academic problems and to any underlying staffing, curricular, or other problems the LEA has experienced, and
- designed to meet the goal of having all students served by Title I achieving at proficient and advanced standards of academic achievement.

7. Corrective Action Required The SEA may take corrective action measures at any time after an LEA has been identified, but it shall undertake such actions if the LEA fails to achieve AYP by the end of the second full school year after it was first identified for improvement. At this stage, the state must take at least one of the following actions:

- defer program funds or reduce administrative funds;
- implement a new curriculum;
- remove the district staff;
- remove certain schools from the district's jurisdiction;
- appoint an outside manager;
- abolish or restructure the LEA, or allow students to transfer to another

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Staff Changes

The Division of State Services and Technical Assistance welcomes two new colleagues: Michael DiMaggio and Oralia Puente.

Michael DiMaggio will be working with the High Poverty Schools Initiative, Community Based Organizations Project as a senior project associate. Michael brings a wealth of experience to the Council. His background includes teaching special education, working in the non-profit sector, and serving as an advocate for disadvantaged youth. Additionally, he has attained advanced degrees in law and public and international affairs, and has nearly completed a degree in special education. Without doubt, Michael's diverse experiences will enhance the efforts of the HPSI and complement the expertise of other staff members.

Oralia Puente joined CCSSO as Senior Project Associate in Early Childhood Education. Oralia has a long and rich history working in early care and education as a teacher, trainer, assessor, and project manager. Her early work was in Head Start as a teacher trainer and most recently she worked with the Head Start Association as a Quality Assurance Manager, overseeing programs of achievement and programs of excellence for the Head Start Association.

The Division bids farewell to two staff members: Cynthia Reeves, Senior Project Associate, and Ruth Gordner, Project Director. Cynthia worked on the High Poverty Schools Initiative and was former editor of *Gaining Ground*. Ruth, who worked on early childhood and family education projects, was a frequent contributor to *Gaining Ground*.

HPSI Conference

The HPSI will be convening its annual meeting May 5 through 8, 2002, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The meeting will be devoted to implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. This will be an opportunity for state and district officials to help one another by sharing plans and strategies for various aspects of the law, including provisions such as accountability, school improvement, special needs children, teacher quality and Reading First. Registration will be accepted until April 15. For more information, please contact Madeline Morrison at (202) 336-7039 or

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district.

Prior to taking of these actions, the State provides the LEA with notice and opportunity for a hearing, which shall take place within 45 days. The SEA publishes a notice to parents and the general public on the internet or through the media and public agencies.

Imposition of these corrective action measures may be delayed for one year only if the LEA makes AYP for one of the two years, or failure to meet AYP was due to a natural disaster or unforeseen decline in financial resources.

Employee Rights Protected Section 1116 (d)

"Nothing with respect to school or LEA improvement or corrective action shall alter or otherwise affect the rights, remedies, and procedures afforded school or school district employees under federal, state, or local laws or under collective bargaining or other agreements between employees and their employers."

8. Removal from LEA Improvement or Corrective Action Status

An LEA that makes AYP for two consecutive years after the date of identification is no longer subject to corrective action for the following school year.

E. STATE SCHOOL SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION SYSTEM

1. State System Each state must establish a statewide system of intensive and sustained support for LEAs and schools receiving Title I funds. This system shall give priority in the following order to:

- LEAs with schools subject to corrective action and assistance to those schools in an LEA that has failed to carry out its responsibilities;
- LEAs with schools identified for improvement; and
- other LEAs and schools that need it.

2. School Support Teams Each state establishes a school support team composed of knowledgeable persons that will:

- review and analyze all facets of a school's operation and assist in developing recommendations for improvement;

- collaborate with parents and school staff in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the school improvement plan;
- evaluate at least semiannually the effectiveness of school personnel assigned to the school;
- make additional recommendations to the SEA regarding other assistance required by the school.

3. School and Teacher Recognition Program

Each state must establish a program for making academic achievement awards to schools that have significantly closed the achievement gap or exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. Schools so rewarded will be known as Distinguished Schools. As part of the state's School Recognition Program, the state may provide financial awards to teachers in Distinguished Schools.

Seventy-five (75) percent of the state's funds reserved for the awards program must go to schools or to teachers in those schools which are in the highest quartile statewide in percentage of low-income students.